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## RYP QUARTERLY

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# Your 'Year-End Elite Team Performance Review Framework'

*By David Stewart Principal RYP International*



*The end of year provides a great time to have some critical reflection on the performance of your team and the effectiveness of your leadership. Like any elite sport organisation, a formal annual review requires a clear framework upon which to reflect on the team performance and set out a course to step up and improve for the year ahead. Having worked with many Elite Organisations, what follows is an 'Elite Performance Framework' for CEOs and Coaches to assess the performance of the team. Apply it to your own Organisation by using a simple "Well - Improve - Requires First Aid" rating system.*

### **1) LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT ALIGNMENT AND EFFECTIVENESS.**

**The alignment and engagement of the Leadership team and their Front-Line Management team is crucial for excellent team performance.** How the vision – mission – values of the team are being communicated, cascaded, and applied to all levels of the organisations is critical to ensure the team stays on mission and performs accordingly. Having front line staff feel empowered, encouraged to be solution focused and know they are supported in making the right call on problems and decisions as and when they occur, will reflect the Leadership & Management Teams alignment. The less aligned the more supervision will be required, as the team will be receiving mixed messages.



## 2) PURPOSE IS BELIEVED – KNOWN – UNDERSTOOD BY ALL.

**NO PURPOSE, NO PASSION!** Understanding and committing to the “why” provides context, meaning and purpose to a team. Purpose is what fuels passion for the organisation and a commitment to the team. Building pride and engagement into a team is the role of leadership. A Leader must create a positive “can do” team environment whilst facilitating passion into the team. If this ingredient is missing then volunteerism, enthusiasm, resilience, and team mindfulness will be lacking.

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Team Climate Precedes Culture*

## 3) COACHING BY FRONT-LINE LEADERS DRIVES IMPROVEMENT

A continuous improvement discipline and approach in the day-to-day performance of the Team, without supervision or oversight by senior Leaders, is an outcome of great coaching. Front line leaders need to be making “good judgement” day in – day out, which ensures consistency and continuity of the “lived experience” of customers. If senior managers must always be overseeing and supervising the performance of front-line staff, then quite clearly, the coaching by middle managers to the team is not working!

## 4) THE TEAM PERFORMS UNDER PRESSURE

As they say, cream rises to the top in a moment of crisis, turmoil, and pressure. Any team can perform when things are quiet and under control. The true test is when the pressure is on. Teams that justify, lay blame, have excuses, or self-combust when under the pump is a good indication of the team’s capability to perform, and hence their leadership and training they have undertaken isn’t working. It is not enough to claim that staff have undergone training, the test is always what team members naturally default to when the pressure is on. This is when a team’s true culture will be revealed.

## 5) LEADERS ROLE MODELS MINDFULNESS AND RESPECT

Decision-making should be guided by the Organisations values, which are relentlessly referred to and pursued, but most symbolically, they are rewarded – recognised – applied and celebrated. Leaders must continuously link what the Organisation stands for to guide performance and decision-making. Placing business metrics before Organisational values is a sure way to kill a leader’s credibility, and the team’s brand (how others describe the team). The standard you walk past is always the standard you accept! Tolerating team members or managers who infuse toxic behaviours and attitudes will automatically corrupt a team’s mindfulness and moral values. Gone are the days of tolerating the “best players” inappropriate behaviour. Just look what is happening in the entertainment industry!

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## **6) PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT**

**If you want to be described as professional, you must look and feel professional in everything you do.** This includes the built environment, lighting, layout, equipment, IT, web, social media, personal presentation and dress standards, concierge facilities (waiting areas, tea & coffee facilities, break out & lunch areas, toilets, and parking). No matter who you are, in this increasingly competitive world, you cannot come across as merely a “try hard.” Teams and clients need to enjoy coming to the work environment.

## **7) EASY & PROFESSIONAL TO DEAL WITH (AT ALL TIMES)**

**If your team is difficult or complicated to deal with chances are your systems and processes fuel a culture of compliance and a staff mindset of permission or sign off to anything outside the status quo!** The formal and informal systems and processes must ensure front line staff can access data quickly and efficiently, or understand their decision-making authorities, to make the right call without first seeking permission from a higher authority. This is a test on the ease of doing business with any team. Ultimately, is your team easy to deal with or complicated and inflexible? There is always a balance between the learned behaviour of decision making and complying with business rules and processes. Ultimately the lived experience feedback loops will reflect how any team is managed and measured.

## **8) ATTRACT & RETAIN GOOD ATTITUDES**

**Having a strong network to attract & retain the right talent with the right attitudes requires a systematic approach.** Using only an external recruitment process is very expensive and some would argue, also lazy. The best hires always occur when someone you



know, and trust “vouches” for the calibre of the potential hire. Having a structured network to cast for potential staff is crucial. Hire for enthusiasm and attitude. Likewise, if you are losing good and talented people from the Organisation it means they are leaving a poor manager. Good people are hard to find. Coach up your staff and managers with positive attitudes, and coach out those poor attitudes.

***A Bad attitude cancels out all other positive skills in any team member.***

## **9) BUILD THE TEAM “BENCH STRENGTH”**

**The team make up will always need to be constantly reviewed, refreshed, and developed.** A “list management” strategy should provide options for the future structure and capacity of the team. This will need constant renewal and requires bold leadership. Balancing loyalty, competence, credibility, skills, and attributes is always hard, but as a rule, the more diverse your team the more talent and flexibility you will have in the future. A diverse team brings a varied mix of thinking, communication, and agility. The depth of talent includes a diversity of years of experience, age ranges and demographics, cultures, thinking styles, personalities, and sexes. **Typically, a leader should be thinking and planning at least two - three years into the future.**

### **SO HOW DID YOU GO?**

**What areas would you give your team a “WELL” rating? Which areas could be “IMPROVED”? And indeed, which areas perhaps require “FIRST AID”?**

I have never met a Leader that has answered “WELL” to everything, but I have met plenty of Leaders with great teams with a healthy dissatisfaction, with the status quo and appetite to improve.

### ***Facta Non Verba – Deeds Not Words***

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